

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates. The cable ownership

cap is a crucial element of our democratic media, and it should not be weakened.

The trend of Americans to go to the alternatives to mainstream U.S. media news has been noted by several polls and media tracking organizations. The alternatives include websites of British and other non-U.S. newspapers, external radio and TV reports retransmitted here, as well as public radio stations within the U.S. The latter, unfortunately, are increasingly becoming less oriented to broad societal purposes than they are more and more focused on the narrow goals of commercial life that drives and distorts balanced, unbiased presentations.

This shift in accessing sources of information is a clear indication that an important portion of the American public is not satisfied with the content and professional journalism of the mainstream line of news. In fact, if this trend continues it is likely to adversely affect the bottom line of the corporate media in a way that will not be advantageous to the bottom line. Advertising rates depend upon viewership levels. When these drop, media has less justification to charge higher rates. When revenues drop, the coverage of news, even if biased, is also bound to drop. As corporate generated news increasingly becomes irrelevant to the real societal issues of the day because it is not examined with balanced judgment about both content and analysis, then the bottom line of the corporation is bound to be affected,

When it is widely perceived that what is presented as "news" approaches what can only be described as laden with bias or propaganda, it will be a product without a market. Importantly, this is what often occurs in countries where media is officially controlled by the government and there is no room for lively debate with a diversity of viewpoints that generate and strengthen democracy. In the end, under these circumstances, the bottom line relating to the preservation of democracy cannot but be seriously distorted.

Biodiversity is being shown to be more and more an essential for preserving the holistic, living environment of earth and our own survival. Media-diversity is no less important as an essential for preserving a functional social and democratic order in our lives.